5: Blom & LaFarge A,E-4,5 (1925) 1927 NV9 Tzeltal NV9

fragments of prayers to him will be given when discussing medicine. Distinct from the guardian of the cornfields, he is known only by name to the ordinary Indians, and mention of him appeared to alarm them a good deal.

Drunkenness still retains some of its old, ceremonial significance, in its association with fiestas, funeral rites, and particularly with medicine, under which head it will be more fully taken up.

There are a number of beliefs and practices, no matter what their origin, which, as they exist today, must be considered as superstitions rather than religion. Of such a type is the belief mentioned when speaking of hunting, that painting the bullet red would make it go further. This is of interest in the study of survivals, in view of the importance of the colour red in pre-Christian times. It may be equally well argued, however, that the red in this case represents the blood of the animal to be slain. Most of the superstitions are concerned with the *nagual* or the soul.

The set of ideas that constitute Nagualism is derived from ancient and important beliefs. The *nagual, tcul-el* (*tcul,* "holy," *-el* "the, the one"), is a companion-spirit to a man, taking the form of some animal. The stronger the *nagual,* the stronger the man, thus one with a jaguar for a familiar could work any kind of magic or other harm on one with a rabbit. We were told both that the *nagual* was assigned by popular consent, due to people's opinion of a man, and that it was seen in a dream. A man who has a quarrel with another will deliberately shoot animals of the species of the other's *nagual,* hoping to hit the particular one associated with his enemy. If that one dies, the man dies, and vice versa. Thus, it is plain that there is no idea of association with a whole class of animals, but only with one individual of a class.

According to Nuñez de la Vega,* in the seventeenth century the *nagual* was assigned by a shaman, who took it from the name of the day on which the individual was born. The child was later caused to see his *nagual* . . . "*se abrazan cariñosamente con su nagual, que por arte diabólica se le apparece muy doméstica y supersticiosamente cariñosa, aunque sea una bestia muy feroz, como leon, tigre, etc.*"† According to Sapper (1925) exactly the same practices obtain in Guatemala today, the animal being caused to appear by means of hypnotism.

It is possible that further investigation would show a similar manner of choosing the *nagual* among the modern Tzeltal. How-

*Nuñez de la Vega, 1702, loc. cit.
†Extract in Panlagua, 1908, Page 87.

7: Nash E-5 (1957-1967) 1970 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Amatenango del Valle

242 *Soil characteristics.* The potential productivity of flat irrigated lands is evaluated on the basis of two criteria: color of the soil and consistency of the soil. The preferred land for cultivation is the black loam mixed with some sand, (*ʔihk'al hiʔiletik lum*). The better, quicker growing corn seed is planted here. These very productive soils are called "hot" [822] [843] [842] lands (*k'isin lum*). (Heat is associated with fertility in both lands and people: a pregnant woman and her husband are considered to be in a state of heat, and the contrast state of being cold is attributed to someone who is sterile.) The red (*tzab'alum*) yellow (*k'analum*), and white soils (*sak lum*) are poorer soils and the slower seed is planted here. These soils are considered "cold" (*sik*) and are thought to be "tired."

The loss of soil productivity is attributed either to the loss of the soul of [774] the crop or to the fact that the soil gets "tired." Farmers have noticed that in the first five years of planting in Tulanca, the ejido land grant, the soil was "hot" and gave good crops. When this productivity was lost, people said the soul of the crop left. It is considered dangerous to start crops in the lower lands of hot country because when the location of crops is changed, the soul leaves its original residence. The notion of crop soul loss does not conflict with the awareness of natural causes of soil productivity. Fields are left fallow for four or five years when productivity diminishes and the soil is "tired." The irrigated lands are in continuous use because there is some replenishment of fertility with the overflow of the ditch waters. Cattle fertilizers are used sporadically. Those who have many head of [233] cattle construct corrals into which they herd the cattle each night. The location of the corral is changed yearly. Corn and beans are then planted in [598] the old corral with superior results. The dozen or so corrals in the town [496] are owned and worked cooperatively by extended families and are referred [551] to by the Indian patronyms—for example, *skoral Linetik* (corral of the Lins) or *skoral Čailetik* (corral of the Čailes). The one attempt to use [177] commercial fertilizers provided by the Ejido Bank proved a technical success but an administrative failure (chapter 3). Indians noted the increased yields, but none have attempted to purchase fertilizers.

Soil consistency is evaluated on the basis of how easy it is to work. Wet, sticky, or clayey soil (*Iučilium*) and stony soil (*kelilum*) are least desirable. Sandy soil is easier to work, but soil productivity depends on a loam

dies are expected to give a funeral appropriate to his station in life and his wealth, as is expressed in the following account:

When my father got sick, he told his wife not to put him in a black box. He had heard a story that when the dead man is in a black box, his spirit cannot see. He wanted to be in a white box. He told this to his brother. But his brother wanted to get a black box. He bought one black box for three hundred pesos when my father died, because it is the custom of the pueblo to bury adults in a black box. The people would talk if we did not buy a good box because they knew he had animals. We spent six hundred pesos for the funeral. We presented the body in church for a mass. We had a singing mass for thirty pesos, and the box cost three hundred pesos. We had a common meal of beef in the house, and we spent two hundred and sixteen pesos for three garrafones of liquor. Each of his sons contributed sixty pesos for that. If we hadn't given him a good funeral, people would have said, "His children are very lax not to buy a good box to bury their father."

The padre says that all bodies should be presented in the church. He says if you don't have money, you don't have to pay for the mass. But we are ashamed if we don't pay because he does work for us. He charged only twenty-five pesos because he said my father worked hard for the town. We took a collection from all the people who were there, and it amounted to one hundred and thirty pesos. We paid the padre for the mass and gave a contribution. All the people in whose houses he had passed when he was alive came to see him. They said, "Ah, his children gave a very nice box for their father."

If all of the family is poor, no one talks if the funeral is not a good one. But if there is anything that can be sold, it will have to be to make a good funeral. When my father died, he had eighteen horses. We had to sell one, and each of the children gave one hundred pesos.

Some say the souls play the harp and drink liquor when they arrive in heaven. On All Soul's Day they visit the village where they had lived and where they are known. For each member of the household who had died, a specific portion of food is laid out. Special likes are catered to: a bottle of liquor will be set on the table for a deceased father, soda pop for children

7: Nash E-5 (1957-1967) 1970 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Amatenango del Valle

Chapter 12

Ordering Behavior by Time

The structuring of social acts depends upon shared understandings about how others use time as well as space. Scheduling of activities in the daily and annual cycles minimizes decision-making by individuals and provides a set of expectations that facilitates cooperation.

The Sense of Time

The abstract noun for time, *k'alal*, is derived from the word for day, *k'al*. Time began when k'oš, the youngest son of Our Grandmother the Moon, took the sun from his elder brother and carried it around the world so that there was a succession of day and night (Chapter 8). Time past, (*name?iš*), is a general state of being in which the ancestors lived. The future is at best a recapitulation of the past.

People judge time by the position of the sun during the day, and by that of the moon or the stars at night. In winter, the appearance of the group of stars called "the sandal" and in summer of the "seven stars" indicates two o'clock in the morning. The appearance of Venus, called "the big star," announces the arrival of dawn.

In addition to these natural indicators, there are three timepieces in the town—in the school, the parish house, and the store. In the morning the policemen check the time with the lay sisters or the schoolmaster before mounting the tower of the church to strike the bell at eight o'clock, the time for rounding up the schoolchildren, at noon, the time for closing the town hall and the church, and at five in the afternoon, the time for evening prayers.

Despite bells and nature, however, people are not very accurate in calcu-